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# THE MODEL

## AND OTHER POEMS

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COTSFORD DICK

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# THE MODEL,

## *AND OTHER POEMS.*

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

BY

COTSFORD DICK.

LONDON:
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.
1886.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

*To*

H. J. H. AND D. M. H.

THESE POEMS ARE AFFECTIONATELY

DEDICATED.

950453

## *PREFACE.*

*THE author has to thank the Editors of the "St. James's Gazette," "Temple Bar," and the "World," for permitting him to reprint such of the following verses as have already appeared in their pages.*

*"The Old Fishwife" and "The Anxious Lover," are published as songs by Messrs. Enoch, of* 19, *Holles Street, W., under the titles of "The Turn of the Tide," and "'Tis all I Ask."*

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# THE MODEL;

## *AND OTHER POEMS.*

## *THE MODEL.*

THE noontide whitens to the South,
Campagna parches in the drouth
Of Midsummer's full days ;
The dank sirocco seethes aloud,
The air is as a heated cloud
That from some furnace strays :
Madonna mia ! of thy grace
Refresh the burning of my face.

Here at thy shrine, where lilies sweet
Encluster'd lie before thy feet,
My eyes forget the glare,
My thoughts escape the city wall,
I hear again the goatherd's call,
I breathe the fresher air :
Madonna ! must these gates of Rome
For ever keep me from my home ?

## THE MODEL.

My home beyond the Sabine hills,
Where prattling breeze, and purling rills,
To preludes soft give birth ;
Beneath the lordly chestnut sweep,
Our twinkling feet would deftly leap
In saltarels of mirth.
Madonna ! as the twilight fell
We ne'er forgot thy praise to tell.

Why was I singled from the rest
To leave that dewy meadow crest,
Renounce my loved ones' care ?
Why was it that my eyes and braids
Were darker than all other maids' ?
My stature, too, more rare ?
Madonna ! children must have bread—
My beauty was of price, they said.

With curious coifs I now bedeck
My hapless head ; around my neck
Strange amulets depend ;
All day, begirt with kirtles quaint,

## *THE MODEL.*

To some coy quean, or some fair saint,
Its grace my form must lend :
Madonna ! in such vacant toil
So tediously the hours uncoil !

Three years (come holy Lammas-tide)
I left my mother's guardian side
To lodge with stranger folk,
And promised with my last caress
No faithless lips with mine should press,
No trothless love be spoke :
Madonna dear ! thou knowest well
I have no secret shame to tell.

I fealty kept. My heart, so long
Untun'd to varied verse in song,
Beat on in monotone ;
Unstirr'd by gifts or guerdon's lure,
The stream of life is still as pure
As this clear altar-stone :
Madonna ! be it now confessed
The spell that has my soul possessed.

## *THE MODEL.*

Within the octave of that day
When our dear Lord put death away,
And rose beyond the tomb,
My footsteps led me down the street
Which students throng, anon to meet
In some grave lecture-room :
Madonna ! was it chance, or cause,
That bade me near that gateway pause,

Where lingered one of nobler mien
Than others are ? He should have been
Cast from some kingly mould ;
As serpents fascinate the bird
He marked me there—with one brief word
My service then was sold :
Madonna ! for that moment's space
I blessed the beauty of my face.

As fruit within the flower lives,
As bud, matur'd, the blossom gives,
As April ushers May,
So from my newly ripen'd heart

## *THE MODEL.*

A sudden passion swift did start,
I bent beneath its sway :
Madonna ! for my weal or woe
I love him !—that is all I know.

He comes, a painter, from the land
Where silent snows eternal stand
High in the crystal air ;
Where, through the frozen winter nights,
The sky reflects with arctic lights
Phantasmagoria rare ;
Madonna ! in a world so drear
Must love not be disbarr'd by fear?

I stand him for Saint Cecily,
She with her wondrous melody
Awoke an angel's love ;
Ah ! could I from some charmèd scale
Draw siren chords which might prevail
This mortal's soul to move !
Madonna ! tapers here shall burn
If I persuasive strains may learn !

## *THE MODEL.*

Hour after hour, intent, he sits,
Too loud the tiniest lace-pin quits
My bodice for the ground ;
The restless brushes, as they seek
To match the colour in my cheek,
Swirl with a sable sound :
Madonna ! an he would but speak !
Alas ! my mother's vow grows weak.

I who would all my wit ungird
To gain one look, one tender word,
His silence stern must share ;
The while with tears of pride and pain
My vision dims, my lips must fain
A smile ecstatic wear :
Madonna ! is to love so well
Akin to joys of heaven or hell ?

His brows are folded deep with thought,
No frailer feeling there has wrought
An unaccustomed line ;
Alone, within his world of Art

## *THE MODEL.*

He dwells: with him I have no part,
No fitness to combine;
Madonna! chide me not; be kind,
Life is so barren—love so blind.

I could not count with him to mate,
To weave into his ampler fate
My incompleter aim;
Nor shall it otherwise be said—
"She moves with him, unblest, unwed,"
A tarnish on his name:
Madonna! in its flexion far
The planet ranks below the star.

He 'waits me—now thy shrine I quit,
Once more his influence to submit,
Benignant or malign;
As midnight suns inflame the skies
He draws me with his northern eyes
To dream of love divine;
Madonna! must I then forego
The dual life which all should know?

## *THE MODEL.*

Vouchsafe thy virgin veil to spread
Around my frail defenceless head,
Shield my too wistful soul!
Henceforth shall no man move my heart,
I'll choose with thee a maiden's part,
Long as the years shall roll:
Ave Maria! full of grace,
God's glory shine upon thy face!

## *A RETROSPECT.*

THE day declines to a dusk so dreary,
Lowers the light in the southern sky,
Life seems waning, for love grows weary,
Cold is the hearth when the embers die.
Back o'er the past is my gaze e'er bending ;
—As will the ivy the ruin entwine,
So I cleave to those days with fealty unending,
When you were my darling, O lover mine !

Mute are the lips that parted in pleasure,
Chanting low carols of ardent rhyme,
Folded the hands that linked in the measure
Together we trod in the round of Time.
O for one word in that same sweet fashion
Wherein our troth its promise would prove ;
O for one note from that chord of passion
Which youth struck loud on the lyre of love.

## *A RETROSPECT.*

Once, only once, we wandered together,
Over the braes as the moon moved high ;
Lightly our footsteps pressed out the heather,
Heard we no sound save the curlew's cry.
It was enough—for our levelled lashes
Drew the soft dews from the fragrant lea,
And our tear-drops mingled, and stilled to ashes,
The flame in our hearts that should not be.

Once, only once ! Shall we ne'er recover,
The tangled threads of that distant dream ?
The river yields to the sea a lover,
The willow kisses the willing stream.
And there comes to my soul no phantom presage,
Tho' now in the twilight our lives divide ;
Yet the dawn shall break with a merciful message,
To call me again to my darling's side.

## *TWO SEASONS.*

SUMMER is here, so fervent and fair,
(Hey, for blossom and bloom !)
Weaving a web for the world to wear
From the threads of her sunlit loom.
Maids are merry, and masters sigh,
(Hey, for laughter and love !)
Mischievous grows the wanton pie,
Daintily coos the dove.

Winter is here, and the light is short,
(Hey, for the frost and the flood !)
Younger pulses quicken in sport,
Chilled is the ancient blood.
Cheerily circles the goblet round,
(Hey, for wassail and wench !)
Parlour and pantry with jest resound,
And the storm outside doth drench.

## *PENELOPE'S PLAINT.*

SAD and slow, sad and slow,
Languish the hours away :
Sad and slow, from gleam to glow,
Tracing my desolate day.
Never a sail from the laughing sea,
Wooing my wanderer back to me,
Smiles to this silent strait ;
So must I wearily, so must I drearily,
Weave and wait.

Fast they fly, fast they fly,
Restless through shuttle and loom,
Fast they fly, the threads I ply,
Rivals of pomegranate bloom.
Fretting a scarf for my truant to wear,
Scarlet and gold in a small damascene rare.
Till love with my life shall mate
So must I wearily, so must I drearily,
Weave and wait.

## *CIRCUMSTANCE.*

AS deep-set pools enfoliag'd bear
The stagnant semblance of decay,
Till some chance sunbeam's random ray
Reveals the life that labours there ;

As gifted rods alone will bend
Responsive to one favour'd hand,
To recognise beneath the land
What way the secret spring doth wend ;

So Love that, haply, yet denies
His image to our anxious keep,
Waits only in the poppied sleep
That hangs around oblivious eyes

## *CIRCUMSTANCE.*

For sympathetic lips to gain
  The password to his slumb'ring heart,
  And with a touch, perchance, restart
The pulses through the languid vein.

For every seed that falls to earth,
  Cast by the heedless bird aloft,
  The cloud distils one rain-drop soft
To swell the fulness of its birth.

## *WORRY.*

THE avalanche with sudden flight
Unplanting forests in its fall,
The lava with a molten pall
Enfolding hamlets from the light,

Impose a transient outward pain
The patient years will soon forget;
To-day the clouds in anger fret,
To-morrow smiles the sun again.

But in the mist that cannot lift,
But in the iceberg's constant breath,
There lurk the parasites of death,
Weaving a shroud without a rift.

Which slowly, surely, circles round
The tissues of the brain and heart,
And life and love, despairing, part
Without a sigh, without a sound.

## *WORRY.*

The light from noblest eyes has flown,
In frequent cares too small to tell,
The ceaseless dropping of the well
Hollows at last the steadfast stone.

## *ANY MAN TO HIS BLACK AND TAN.*

I HAVE a dainty playmate, dear
As is none other to me here
Of my own clan ;
A brass-girt collar decks his throat,
And shines like silk his glossy coat
Of black and tan.

Companion of my lonely walks,
He trots beside me oft, and talks
As best he can ;
Then, wild with sudden glee, will rush
And bark defiance at a thrush.
Hie ! black and tan !

Across his puzzled brain there throng
Confused ideas of right and wrong ;
He has no plan
Of conduct for his daily guide,
The god he worships dwells inside
His black and tan.

But should the world from me forbear,
And with unseasonable stare
Some weakness scan,
One faithful heart, I know, would ache,
Were I with life for aye to break.
Ah ! black and tan !

You're very human, little friend,
I wonder if perchance you end
Where I began ?
Maybe, I used to prank and bark,
And my complexion (save the mark !)
Was black and tan.

Maybe, we're not so far apart ;
Where is the point from which I start
To be a man ?
Come, shake a paw, and let us think
If we can find this missing link,
My black and tan !

## *ANY MAID TO HER TABBY'S SHADE.*

HAIL ! once familiar feline form
That dozing lay,
The livelong day,
In curled contentment snug and warm,
Before my pine-log's genial ray !
Thou hast for me
Now ceased to be,
And joined the great majority.

Alas ! no longer may I stroke
Thy dappled fur ;
Nor hear the purr
Which milky memories surely woke,
What time the tea-cups used to stir,
Or when a dish
Of dainty fish
Evoked a piscatorial wish.

## *ANY MAID TO HER TABBYS SHADE.*

Oft have I watched around thy head
With cleansing zeal
One *patte* to steal,
By hygienic instinct led
(The *Nunc dimittis* of a meal),
And deemed I saw
A moral law
Dictate the action of that paw.

I loved to mark thy glaucous gaze,
So sad, so stern,
Expectant turn
As, quick, within the wainscot's maze
A miscreant mouse didst thou discern ;
And tried to trace
In thy keen face
Some tincture of the human race.

Then to thy confidential ear,
When *tête-à-tête*,
Would I narrate
A tender tale ; nor ever fear

## *ANY MAID TO HER TABBY'S SHADE.*

Irreverence for my spinster state;
For, mute and meek,
Thy courteous cheek
My own in sympathy would seek.

How can I fitly celebrate
That polished air,
That *savoir faire?*
Let votive slab commemorate
A life adorned with virtues rare,
So all may see
My love for thee,
And, passing, whisper, "R. I. P."

## *A CAPRICE.*

BENEATH my lattice Love delayed,
(O rosy tinted dawn !)
I heard a tender serenade
From lute-strings deftly drawn.

Flush'd by the passion of that strain,
(O noontide crowned with gold !)
I murmur'd—" Ah ! with me remain,
My praise shall ne'er grow cold."

His pinions soft did Love unclose,
(O curfew-hour so gray !)
" The rime will reach the reddest rose "—
He sang, and winged away.

## *BALLADE OF BURIAL.*

THE sunlight sways the summer sky,
Quivers with breath each quicken'd blade,
The birds with one another vie
To move to mirth the grove and glade,
While yonder solemn cavalcade
Winds o'er the glebe in gloom august,
Chanting a dead man's serenade,
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

A smile is mated to a sigh,
One flashes 'ere the other fade,
Farce arm-in-arm with tragedy,
So struts the motley masquerade.
Youth deems for joy the world is made,
Till disappointment deals disgust,
Disease defiles the last decade,
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

## *BALLADE OF BURIAL.*

Within the grave our earnest eye
  Beholds a brother's body laid,
Around us sombre hirelings ply
  The unctuous usage of their trade.
  Behind the hedgerow laughs a maid,
Held in a lover's arm robust ;
  One day for her it shall be said,
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

ENVOI.

Life, dost thou still possess the shade
  Of him in earth so rudely thrust ?
Canst thou the sentence yet evade,
  Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ?

## *ICHABOD.*

I.

WHAT pleasure has my life of me,
What pastime yields a widow'd world?
Love shames his Paphian pedigree
With streaming cheeks and locks uncurl'd.

My lips in solemn silence wear
The sacred seal of sorrow strong,
My eyes, as vacant windows, stare
Unconscious of the tactless throng

That outrages my rare distress,
With stereotyp'd solicitudes,
And dons for me a deft address,
Phylacteried with platitudes;

Or breaks upon my guarded grief
With heedless hands and froward feet,
Luring my soul to seek relief,
In some symposium of the street.

## *ICHABOD.*

II.

LET such not claim me of their clay,
To brand with their bucolic breed ;
Could I console with yokel's play,
Or tune my tongue to pipe and reed—

I, who have touched the happy height
That crowns a faultless fellowship —
I, who have watched love's pilot-light
Below the dark horizon dip?

No, let me unremember'd dwell,
Hid in a maze of my own tears,
I only sue for peace to tell
The bead-roll of my lingering years ;

I only crave to be forgot,
As is some Academic rhyme
That from occasion's bow is shot
To hit the humour of the Time.

## *ICHABOD.*

III.

THE lawns of life are sunless grown,
For she—love's gracious gift to me—
Beneath the ilex-shadow'd stone
Sleeps in a southern sanctuary.

Too rudely have the Sisters Three
A web of woe around me cast;
Yet of their ruthless skill is free,
To prove my passport to the past,

Memory—man's minister alone,
That saddest office shall retain,
And wait on Love's dismantled throne
Long as the blood throbs through the brain.

The ways of earth are weary now
To feet by tristful thongs controll'd,
To hands that urge a lonely plow,
Across the world's unfurrow'd wold.

## *ICHABOD.*

IV.

ONCE more I gaze upon the gates
That opening to my ardent knock,
Surrendered from her maiden mates
The fairest in a favour'd flock.

What was my praise that Love should yield
His treasures to my untried care,
Should single out my simple shield,
And stamp his lordly quarterings there?

Cassandra whispered in her wise—
—Can good from evil e'er divorce?
All power centripetal implies
A compensating counter force.

I laughed the warning to the wind,
I hurled experience the lie:
O fool! I never dreamed to find
Fulfilment of that prophecy.

## *ICHABOD.*

v.

ATHWART the Manse the moonbeams fall,
Quaintly the pleachèd yew-trees stare,
Within the moated garden wall
The evening primrose holds the air.

Hark! yon unlattic'd oriel pane
To loitering ears sweet rhythm flings;
Two voices blending in one strain,
Led by the am'rous viol-strings.

I will not brook to hear the chant
Of that too tender madrigal,
Perchance th' unwitting visitant
At some betrothal festival,

But to the grave-girt belfry steal,
Let loose the chimes upon the air,
And slake my passion with their peal,
In diapasons of despair.

## *ICHABOD.*

VI.

THERE is no Good which may draw near,
Unlooked for as a sudden ship,
But grows to Better in the cheer
Flashed from a brother's friendly lip.

There is no grief which may appear
Too harsh for resignation's sigh
But yet is temper'd by the tear
That trembles in a sister's eye.

For love by sympathy begot,
As suns are sphered from floating flame,
Ripens the heart which else would rot
Thro' cank'ring blight of selfish aim.

So two may lead to fruitful end
The thought some noble law to bear,
Where one might fail to apprehend
The pregnant purpose folded there.

VII.

WE linked our lives in treat and task,
Twin wayfarers o'er Fortune's plain,
Content beneath one sun to bask,
Beneath one roof resist the rain.

O happy halcyon summer days
That marshalled in our marriage moon,
When with our random roundelays
We stirred the stillness of the noon.

When twice ten fingers would entwine
A rose-pluckt garland, pale and red,
To decorate some household shrine,
Or crown a lov'd and laureate head.

Still to their god the sunflowers raise
Responsive disks of deference,
Yet nevermore my darling's gaze
Shall claim my answ'ring reverence.

VIII.

TOGETHER, when the sickle caught
The golden grain within its girth,
In those unclouded hours we sought
The method of th' impartial earth,

And marked her patient labour sure
Leash all her offspring 'neath one law;
There is no plantain too obscure
From her large care its life to draw.

At night within the star-set chain
We turned the Southern cross to trace,
And tried, untutored, to explain
The spangled spectacle of space

With interchange of daring thought
That made us tremble for the truth,
As instinct with tradition fought,
And slew the idols of our youth.

## *ICHABOD.*

IX.

WHEN in the east the first faint flush
Mantled upon the brows of day,
Our spirits from their sleep would rush
To meet the morning on her way,

Inhaling from the waves of dawn
New vigour for the after hours,
As faith to falt'ring feet has drawn
Strength from occult magnetic pow'rs.

And when the western welkin held
The sun upon his waning way,
To some wise sermon we would weld
The gather'd gossip of the day,

In counter converse haply cast
A horoscope for current guide,
And bid the failure of the past
The future victory decide.

## *ICHABOD.*

### X.

WE kept a daybook of our dreams,
A calendar of hopes and aims;
Each page was grave with earnest schemes—
Last night I gave it to the flames,

And watched the puck'ring parchment skin
Infiltrate with the pine-log's dust;
It surely was a sorrier sin
To keep it—for the lock to rust,—

For ruder men to estimate
With cynic sneer and critic lash
What seemed to us so good, so great—
Better oblivion in the ash.

## *ICHABOD.*

### XI.

WHY should my pen its humour take
To trace out sorrow's alphabet?
Why should my rhyme its reason break
Upon the wheel of lame regret?

I cannot cast anew the clay,
Rebuild the bones, revive the breath,
Nor master one who owns no sway,
That great disorganizer—Death.

We beckon one from out the world,
A lonely niche in life to fill;
But ere the year is half uncurl'd
The lips we pressed are closed and chill.

We rear a tender plant with care,
Sweet promise of yet sweeter bloom,—
Inclement blows the frostèd air,
And, lo, the cradle is the tomb.

## *ICHABOD.*

### XII.

IS there no sacrament to urge
  The life transferr'd to other state
Once more in mortal mould to merge,
  And with us take divine debate?

No ritual with runes o'erspread,
  More decorous than warlock trick,
Whereat those comrades called the dead
  Might hold communion with the quick?

That we—who yearning to reveal
  The secrets of the shrouded door
Are ever struggling to unseal
  The pages of forbidden lore—

May in their vaster vision share,
  Break down the pale of stern suspense,
And know that all our piteous prayer
  Wails with no wasted eloquence.

## *ICHABOD.*

### XIII.

I WOULD not yoke with touch unblest
To gratify the wish profane
That violates my darling's rest,
—To tempt her back to me again.

The gate that guards her from my gaze
Yields to no sudden sesame ;
Auspicious hands the latch to raise
Must clasp in staunch solemnity.

For woe to such unhallow'd chance
That, striking on a mystic chord,
Evokes with impious arrogance
A strain in Paradise abhorr'd.

## *ICHABOD.*

XIV.

SOMETIMES within a waking dream,
When all the lamps of life are pale,
A passing presence seems to gleam
Behind a dimly luminous veil.

I stretch forth wistful hands to grasp
The measure of that fading fold;
Alas! my too expectant clasp
Closes upon the vacant cold.

Again I see the vision there
Dilating from the curtain'd wall;
A wordless whisper waves the air,
On one familiar name I call.

Dear ghost—an thou indeed be such—
Vouchsafe to me one little sign;
I would not tremble at thy touch,
Dictated by a will benign!

## *ICHABOD.*

XV.

IT may be that those wandering wraiths
  Than ice more instant to dissolve,
Wan sponsors to the fervent faiths
  Round which such happy hopes revolve,

Are fancies of a mind misled,
  Subjective phantoms of a brain,
Wherein disordered blood is sped
  Too swiftly thro' the vivid vein.

While, from the thought that earth's great grief
  Some guerdon otherwhere must earn,
Distils the passionate belief
  To which all suffering senses yearn,

That when this motley martyr—Man—
  Draws the last breath of bitterness,
His spirit, quit of mortal span,
  Perennial pleasure must possess.

XVI.

BEAT they more blest those hearts devout
Which move upon their reverent way
Deaf to the waterfall of doubt
That darkens heaven with its spray,

Fed with the faith that loves to draw
From omens swift in consequence
Assurance of supernal law,
Where science claims coincidence,

The faith that marks a wrath divine
As lightning-bolts lay bare the bark,
That hails a sacred countersign
Encircled in the rainbow's arc,

Than those which in their course are wrack'd
By cruel systoles of despair,
As fondled fables fall to fact,
And creeds their bankruptcy declare?

## *ICHABOD.*

XVII.

I CANNOT bid my tears unmix
In crucibles of pious mould,
Nor on a clement cross affix
The scroll whereon my grief is told;

No litanies of long lament
Can sheathe my soul against its strife,
No peevish prayers that men invent
Can thrid the labyrinth of life.

For when my languid lips begin
To part in penitential plaint,
Where sorrow compensates for sin,
And of submission wails its feint,

A nobler instinct dares control
My truckling tongue, and yearns to prove
That as no expiatory toll
Is pluck'd the light from all we love.

## *ICHABOD.*

XVIII.

O SPIRIT, wheresoe'er thou art
Round whom all thoughts of Being range,
Who dost to life its laws impart,
Unsway'd by choice, untouch'd by change,

Control this dim intelligence
Now wrestling in a baffled brain
With thrall of superstitious sense,
A blighting heritage and bane:

Invest these clouded cells with light
Struck from the tinder of that tree
Whence blooms of knowledge infinite
One day shall crown humanity:

Touch what is near in mine to thine
With intuition's happy hand;
So when the day vouchsafes to shine
My eyes shall see—and understand.

## *THE ANXIOUS LOVER.*

GIVE me your love—'tis all I ask,
My dear, aye dearest, heart,
And of such gift I fain do claim
The whole nor any part.
I would not that your whisper'd words
On other ears fall sweet,
I would not that your lightest touch
Another's clasp should meet.
Then smile no smile that some may deem
Your lips for them to wear,
Then weep no tears whose course might stay
Beneath another's care.
And if too eager I pretend
To soothe your faintest sigh,
'Tis that the light of all my life
In your dear love doth lie.

## *AN INVITATION.*

WHEN Spring in varied vesture clad
Yields fairer promise day by day,
When Youth and Hope again grow glad,
And thro' the world go forth to play,
Come to me, dear—for in my heart
So sweet a welcome I'll prepare,
That thou wilt fain no more depart,
But live with love for ever there.

When Summer hangs her golden fruit,
And swells each bud with blossom rare,
When longing lips grow strangely mute,
And envious eyes their faith forswear,
Come to me, dear—and let us claim
That happy hour so long denied,
So shall our garner'd passion shame
The fulness of the summertide.

## *AN INVITATION.*

When Winter's icy-burden'd breath
  Invests the air with chill alarms,
When o'er the earth that dreams of death
  The trees extend their leafless arms,
Come to me, dear—for in my heart
  So soft a shelter I'll prepare,
That thou wilt fain no more depart,
  But live with love for ever there.

## *THE OLD FISHWIFE.*

THERE'S a light on the harbour bar, Janet,
That tells of the wrack outside,
And the clouds drive fast to the lash of the wind,
And the surf rolls in with the tide—
'Twas just such a night as he went away
(Ah me, if we could but know !),
Ere you were born to the world, my dear,
Many a year ago.

All thro' the night by the window-pane
We watched the white waves break,
And prayed for the brave hearts out on the main
Who work for the children's sake.
But low in the dawn the tale was told
How spar from spar was reft,
And my gudeman was taken aloft,
While I with the bairns was left.

## *THE OLD FISHWIFE.*

Nay, tears should not dim your eyes, Janet,
The world's yet young for you ;
'Tis all for the best, the parson says—
But ah ! if we only knew !
And do not ask me to stay, my dear,
I long to be there by his side,
Maybe he's watching for me to-night,
And waits for the turn of the tide.

## *AN APPEAL.*

WHAT have I done amiss, dear,
What have I left unsaid,
That you refuse your answer,
That you avert your head?
Is it beyond atonement,
Past all alternative,
Say, have I most forgotten
That you would least forgive?

Beckon one tender souvenir
Back from the yielding years,
Let not the flower of pleasure
Set with the fruit of tears:
All the most fragile blossoms
Fall to the untoward blast,
Love's image, bruised and shattered,
Never can be re-cast.

## *AN APPEAL.*

What should we say to-morrow
  If we divide to-day?
Silence would shape to sorrow,
  Discord would deal dismay.
Turn to me then, my darling,
  Smile as you used before,
Let us join hands together,
  Kiss—and we part no more.

## *ON WATERLOO BRIDGE—MIDNIGHT.*

NO—you shan't touch me—I'm not drunk nor
crazy.
Where was I going? well, if you must know,
Straight for the river, down there, I was making—
Maybe you can tell if the tide's high or low.

Nay—I've no relatives—none that would own to me,
Society now is my bitterest foe;
Once I had mother and sisters—a lot of them,
Bless 'em!—but that seems a good while ago.

O, that my face should be stared at by such as ye,
Gaped on by women and men of the town!
Ain't the gas bright enough—can't ye see right
enough,
Whether my ringlets be yellow or brown?

## *ON WATERLOO BRIDGE—MIDNIGHT.*

Sure there was one who'd have knocked ye all
down, men,
Daring to touch me, his darling, his own ;
Where is he now? Well, I'm going to find him—
I've something to tell him. Come, leave me alone.

Be he a mortal, or be he a spirit—
Be he on earth—be he under the sod ;
I've sworn to meet him to-night—and I'll do it—
Hands off now—you pushed me—I'm falling—ah,
God !

## *FAILURE.*

WHAT cometh to me in the dawning,
When the lights grow pale at the feast,
When the birds in the eaves do twitter,
And the heliotrope looks to the east?
—Lips that a prayer would utter
For what must be done—or undone—
Hands impatient to finish
The work that is half begun.—

What cometh to me in the twilight,
When the owl sets forth on her quest,
When the stars overhead do twinkle,
And the earth rolls round to the west?
—A brain that is scorched by fire,
Cheeks that with tears are wet,
A sorrowful sad desire,
A masterful mad regret.

## *THE WATCHER.*

AS one who, gazing on the frozen deep,
Distrusts the thought that ice can e'er expand,
So I, beholding such stern solemn sleep
Scarce credit the awaking. This strong hand
Which clung to mine, as darkness gathered round,
Now lies inflexible; the anxious eyes
Question no more—have they their answer found
Before the presence of a God, all-wise?
O for a crust upon the waters cast!
O for a sign that all is well at last!

## *AT PARTING.*

THE white cliff reddens to the setting sunbeams
A fainter glory gilds the amber sea,
The calm day closes to a calmer twilight,
And brings the parting hour for you and me.
What does the night-wind whisper in its sighing,
Breathes there a chant of pleasure or of pain?
The shadows bear the ling'ring light beyond us,
And give no promise of the dawn again.

The stars all night shall watch in silver silence,
The moon, discreet, no lover's tales shall tell,
The world in sleep forgets awhile its weeping,
Until once more the morning breaks the spell.
Then, love, beneath thy rose-entangled lattice
I'll linger while the last star holds the sky,
And the first golden ray shall find me waiting
To give sweet challenge to this brief "Good-bye."

## *THE COQUETTE.*

SHE gave him her hand in the measure
They trod at the Old Year's wake,
He thought with a pitiful pleasure
'Twas all for his love's dear sake ;
Their footsteps hastened to borrow
New life from the laughter and light ;
What matter the waking to-morrow,
If the dreaming be deeper to-night ?

He gave her his heart in the measure
They danced at the New Year's birth,
She deemed it a toy—not a treasure—
To hold for a moment of mirth ;
A plaything—to please and to perish—
The passing of Time to beguile,
So she threw him a blossom to cherish,
And answered his sigh with a smile.

## *THE COQUETTE.*

In the dusk of a distant December,
  As she sits by the embers alone
Will she, lonely and loveless, remember
  The life that she once might have known?
The pleading—so noble and tender,
  The promise she gave to forget?
Aye the sowing of sorrow will render
  A harvest of restless regret.

## *THE NEOPHYTE.*

IN the dim mysterious chantry where the shadows never yield,
And the laws of light and freedom seem by long disuse repeal'd,

Overshadow'd by the Angels carved upon his oaken stall,
See, the Novice kneels obedient to his Holy Mother's call!

He has come a plaintive suppliant, seeking shelter from the strife,
Choosing rather level leisure than the upper active life.

He has prayed to be forgiven sins he durst not understand
From a conscience seared and quiv'ring with a superstitious brand.

He has scrutinized each feeling, disentangled every thought,
Cross-examined all the motives that he deemed by sin distraught,

Analysed inherent instincts--so from truth his judgment wean'd,
That the appetites of Nature seem the promptings of the Fiend ;

And his baffled drooping senses faint before the crucial heat,
While his intellect falls prostrate, helpless, impotent, effete.

From the painted chancel window Virgin Saints enraptur'd stare,
Smiling on his strangled passions cast before the altar there ;

Breathing barren benedictions on the holocaust he spreads,
While the aureole with fervour glows around their spotless heads.

'Tis for him the swaying censer waves the perfumes of the East,
'Tis for him the quick confession claims the pardon of the priest;

'Tis for him the magic monstrum holds its miracle on high;
'Tis for him the anthem rises to a hymn of victory!

With th' inexorable scalpel he has laid his life in twain,
But this one ecstatic moment compensates for all the pain.

o o o o o

There will come a day of anguish with such bitter memories tinged,
That his tongue shall utter discords, ravings of a soul unhinged:

When the unforgiving present and the unforgotten past
Shall be weighed upon the balance, in the scales together cast.

When what might have been—a spectre deem'd at rest for ever laid—
Calls, the creditor of Nature, for a debt that must be paid.

Nature cannot thus be outraged, even in the name of God:
Judgment on the self-tormentor—wisdom follows from the rod.

Time will hold a cruel crystal to his unevasive eyes,
Bidding these reflected ashes from their mausoleum rise—

—Youth with busy fingers weaving threads of gold in fancy's loom;
—Faith as strong as summer sunshine changing blossom into bloom;

—Hope awaking all the pulses of a heart that beats for truth;
—Love, unfolding, as the manhood bursts the chrysalis of youth.

These have passed beyond him, and his isolated
soul will pine
For one touch of human passion, for one sympa-
thetic sign.

All his Being, broken on the wheel that turns a
priestly car,
Writhes, Ixion-like in anguish, crying — Death
were better far.

* * * * *

Perish creeds which twist to dogmas faiths they
cannot vindicate,
Charging with caprice and humour laws the most
inviolate,

Fretting human hearts with fetters forg'd around
a fabled fall,
Solving all their phantom problems with the saddest
scheme of all.

Not upon a guiltless proxy should the sin and
shame be cast,
That each one of us inherits from a foul ancestral
past.

Justice cries—The child must taste the fruit that ripens from the tree
Planted by his parents' hand, for good or ill—their choice is free.

We—examples to the future—shall we merit praise or blame?
Shall it hold our memory fair, or deal dishonour to our fame?

Blessing—This wise noble brother surely drew diviner breath?
Cursing—This one, sin-indulgent, scattered but disease and death?

Man, degraded by the vice to which a selfish soul will yield,
Sinks below the brutes he tortures 'neath his scientific shield;

Man, refining coarser instincts, winnowing his wanton wills,
Yet may reach that sacred sphere where life from Energy distils.

Then let each one, bravely seeking manumission
for his soul,—
Cleave the bars of prejudice that hold him slavish
in control.

By a pure unselfish conduct, learning truth from
reason's lip,
Show Humanity the Type most fitted for survivor-
ship.

In no servile salutations to a God, misunderstood,
Can we ever fathom all the fulness of the Father-
hood.

In sectarian isolation, cynical of others' good,
Can we never strike the sympathetic chords of
Brotherhood.

Life is love in action, diadem'd with one bright
ornament—
A crown of duty consecrated by the chrism of con-
tent;

Shaping to salvation thro' a ministry of blameless deeds,
Trammel'd by no trite traditions, crippl'd by no churlish creeds.

As the fulness of the blossom gives its standard to the tree,
So in value to the world the measure of each life must be.

# SEVEN SONNETS.

## *NEW YEAR'S DAY.*

*L E roi est mort!* Welcome to thee, New Year,
Who on the throne of Time thy place dost take
To banish one, for sad or sweetest sake,
To most endeared! Shall we thy reign revere,
Or crown thine abdication with a cheer?
How many large intents strong hearts will make,
How many brave resolves weak hands will break,
Ere may be told the tale of thy career!

So let him, who in thy twelve months of grace
Profit, not loss, to his account would place,
Heed lest he dissipate those fair estates,
Honour and health! The fool his fortune spends
In wanton ways; the wise man hesitates
To mortgage lawful means for lawless ends.

## *MARIO.*

(IN MEMORIAM, DECEMBER, 1883.)

ONWARD and onward rolls the car of song,
Freighted with troubadours of ev'ry race;
Yet ever and anon fades there some face,
Some favoured presence from its tuneful throng;
And when a master-bard that choir among
Yields to the chilly clasp of death's embrace,
Then rises from the Muses' market-place
A dirge of desolation, loud and long.

O sweetest singer that the southern wind
E'er wafted to make northern hearts rejoice,
We now, who, mourning thee, recall a voice
Tuned to a diapason most divine,
Bid thee farewell, and pray thy spirit find
Its resting-place in some symphonious shrine!

## *THE PASSION FLOWER.*

SOFT birth—sweet life—swift death—in one short day,
That bids thee open, but to close, thine eyes ;
In vain the light that in thy calyx lies,
In vain the airs which round thy petals play,
Plead for reprieve, thy fate must thou obey,
And watch the red dawn flush the ashen skies,
And hear the whisper of the night wind rise,
Once, only once—then drift into decay.
Strange ! in thy brilliant blossom thou dost bear
The sad insignia of the saddest woe ;
As some brave soul, and mute, may outward wear
A smiling semblance, while the heart below
Aches 'neath a crown of thorns, hid with such care,
That those untaught the secret never know.

## *A FAREWELL.*

YES! we must part; the hour has come in sooth,
When you and I, my dear, must bid farewell,
And so, reluctant, break that sacred spell
Of friendship woven in our far-off youth.
Yet will I chant no requiem of ruth
For you departed; your great gain should quell
All selfish tolling of my heart's deep knell,
For you shall know at last what is the truth!
I grudge you not—but pray it may be given,
When, spent with languor of my lonely love,
I strive with Faith (as others may have striven)
Your soul to quit the sphere where it shall move,
And pass to earth, with some sweet word of heaven,
Whispered to me, below, from you, above.

## *THE TRAVELLER'S JOY.*

WILD CLEMATIS ! yclept the traveller's joy,
(Since he, whom choice or chance may call from home,
Sudden, beholding thy dim feathery foam
On alien hedgerows, seems again a boy,
And childhood's days once more his thoughts employ)
If o'er my pleasance thou unasked wilt roam,
Spare my young saplings when thou e'er dost come,
Which thy impatient clasp would swift destroy.
Yet though impetuous visitor thou art,
Most wayward branch of most erratic stock,
I would not altogether with thee part,
Nor turn, unfriendly, from thy vernal knock ;
So may thy tender tendrils touch my heart,
Content to garnish some intrusive rock !

## *FELO DE SE.*

METHOUGHT the world too wayward for my life;
Vext with vague yearnings that denied all rest,
Spent with vain crusades after wisdom's best,
While disappointment, keener than a knife,
Cut all content in twain. The air was rife
With phantom faiths once by my soul possest
To leave it yet more vacant. So—truth's quest
Unfruitful grown—I longed to quit the strife.

When taking cunning counsel with my brain
How with most dignity to disappear—
"Fool!" rang the rude rejoinder—"know, in vain
Thou'dst seek extinction: rather then revere
This earth's apprenticeship wherefrom to gain
Credentials to some more exalted sphere."

## *TO THE OLD YEAR.*

YET one more pearl set in the crown of Time,
Yet one more print upon th' eternal sands,
And thou, Old Year, with folded fateful hands
Passest beyond our ken. The winter rime
Fashions thy shroud : the customary chime
Rings out a " Vale " over lakes and lands,
And at thy bier, impartial, Clio stands
Marking thy memory on her scroll sublime.

Farewell ! to younger lips the laughter leaps
In leaving thee, for on the harp of love
Hope sings of happier after-hours the praise.
Farewell ! o'er elder eyes the tear-mist creeps,
As wistfully their gaze doth mindful move
Down the dim avenue of bygone days.

# VERS D'OCCASION.

## *THE IRISH ARMADA.*

(A PROBABLE LAY OF THE FUTURE.)

ATTEND, all ye who list to hear our noble Leaguers' praise;
I tell of how they shattered London town in ancient days,
When that omnipotent invention, nitro-glycerine,
Destroyed the greatest city that the world has ever seen.

'Twas about the yellow close of a dim November day
When through the fog in Mersey's stream a steamer found her way;
Her crew were cynic citizens of a Socialistic State,
And in their unsuspected kit they carried England's fate.

The Custom House they passed with smile and tributary vail—
They'd really nothing to declare, and had to catch the "Mail."
When in the train, with wary art a fresh disguise each took,
And met the guards at Euston with a frank, *dégagé* look ;
One hundred cabs were quickly hailed, and drove to left and right ;
One hundred bags of dynamite in London lay that night.

Oh ! how their hearts were beating when before the dawn of day,
Those chivalrous Invincibles pursued their wily way.
Each carried in his overcoat a homicidal box,
Devised by art and science with mysterious lids and locks,
Wherein reposed a mimic mine, a toy of spring and wheel,
That, deftly fixed, and deftly fired, the direst death could deal.

## *THE IRISH ARMADA.*

It was agreed that every man at six o'clock A.M.
Should start the clockwork that was only reticent
*pro tem.;*
And seven good hours beyond that time, when
they were well away,
Those clocks would strike a note to fill all England
with dismay.

The Lord Mayor's festival it was; and he, in civic
dress,
Was passing down the sinuous Strand, where most
the crowd did press;
The Aldermen with sallow smiles were yearning
for their lunch,
Though buoyant with well-grounded hopes of turtle
and of punch;
The many-scutcheon'd coaches, the City's pomp
and pride,
Were marshalled there, while painted pennons
waved from side to side;
The people shouted in the street, forgetful of their
wrongs,
Dissembling all their grievances with staves of
comic songs:

## *THE IRISH ARMADA.*

When sudden from the east and west, and from
the north and south,
There came a flash—a thunder-clap—and closed
was every mouth.
From Bayswater to Billingsgate, from Bloomsbury
to Bow,
From Hampstead's heath, from Hackney's down, to
far-off Pimlico,
The ghastly flames leaped skyward with a hoarse
triumphant roar,
Then pretty nearly half the public buildings were
no more!
The Abbey walls fell out, St. Paul's majestic dome
fell in;
The Thames engulfed the Tower; Big Ben came
down with clangorous din;
The Post Office was quite out-stamped; Old Bailey
burst in two;
The Bank was broke; to hold its own was all the
Mint could do;
The Albert Hall a ruin lay; the Palace followed
suit;
The Law Courts bounded in the air, then sank for
ever mute.

## *THE IRISH ARMADA.*

Ho! matrons of Belgravia! Ho! maidens of May-
fair!
Rejoice that ye were out of town, give thanks ye
were not there!
Your lords, who used to legislate in such immoral
ways,
No more shall legislate at all in these new Golden
Days!
We want no King, no Parliament; we'll have no
legal prigs
To frown upon the rights of man beneath their
frowsy wigs.
Hushed is the parson's croak—to-day whatever's
nice is right;
And all that spoke of power and pride is buried
from our sight.
So glory to the master-minds that gave us dyna-
mite,
And glory to the brave recruits who set the town
alight.

## *CREMATION v. CORRUPTION.*

HOW curiously true
'Neath the sun there's nothing new
To be learnt!
In old Rome, as you may know,
When one died 'twas *comme il faut*
To be burnt.

And nowadays 'tis clear
Some folks opinions queer
Entertain;
And ardently desire
To revive the classic pyre
Once again.

At first the notion serves
To give one's pious nerves
Quite a turn;
Is it really right to trust
Our desiccated dust
To an urn?

## *CREMATION v. CORRUPTION.*

Is it not more orthodox
To repose within a box
Underground,
So whenever in request
We are certain in that chest
To be found?

Nay—its advocates exclaim—
Why thus fear the facile flame?
'Neath its power,
Instead of waiting years,
All that's mortal disappears
In an hour!

How very much more horrid
To afford from foot to forehead
Food for germs,
Or bacilli! (pray excuse,
But I always try to use
Proper terms,)

Which, as analysts can tell,
May contaminate some well
Whence we drink,

And an ancestor (poor dear !)
With our health might interfere,
Only think !

Or suppose our bones recline
Where some future railway line
May be laid :
What a most unpleasing sight
Might a navvy bring to light
With his spade !

Better far at once to try
This frame to purify
And exalt,
Than to crumble with one's cousins,
Packed away perhaps by dozens
In a vault.

Though I've signed my testament,
I might add a reverent
Codicil,
Bequeathing to the nation
My relics for cremation—
And I will !

## *THE BURDEN OF VIVISECTION.*

AVE ! SCIENTIA ! MORITURI TE SALUTANT !

THERE'S commotion amongst brute creation,
There's a panic 'mongst poodles and pugs,
And poor puss in confused consternation
Her numerous progeny hugs ;
For 'tis whispered with paralyzed passion,
That an animal's loss is man's gain,
And that Torture's a famous old fashion,
The practice of profitless pain !

Experiments, greeted with rapture,
By custom soon harden the heart,
And our playmates by treacherous capture
Are sold in a pitiless Mart,
To foster the morbid desire
Of some wantonly barbarous brain,
That would knowledge unfruitful acquire
By the practice of profitless pain.

## *THE BURDEN OF VIVISECTION.*

To Science are voted the altars
  Where speechless the victims are bound,
And the stroke of the knife never falters,
  And the acolytes stifle all sound,
As they murmur in murderous measure,
  That wipes from the blood all the stain,
—'Tis a pure philosophical pleasure,
  This practice of profitless pain.'

As each sinew is severed asunder,
  The shrieks of the sufferers swell
To a chorus of agonized wonder
  At this terrible temple of hell;
But wisdom must ever grow stronger,
  And the helpless must never complain,
While humanity blushes no longer
  At the practice of profitless pain.

In vain is their innocence pleaded:
  —"Are men so much nobler, ye think,
That they pass by unpunished, unheeded,
  Souls soddened with vices and drink?

We beat not the wives we should cherish,
From alcohol always refrain;
In mercy, say, why should we perish
By the practice of profitless pain?"—

What matter some lean satisfaction
Be granted to medical art,
In deftly unmasking the action
Of liver—of brain—or of heart,
If his knowledge and infinite power
A man should degrade and profane
By the sinful delight of an hour,
The practice of profitless pain?

ENVOI.

Say, ye whose ambiguous nod
The truth will too often disdain,
Do ye get a diploma from God
For the practice of profitless pain?

## *A VACATION VILLANELLE.*

O HALCYON hours of happy holiday,
Where frets of function and of fashion flee,
(Sweet is the sunshine, soft the summer's sway),
Ye whisper 'welcome' to our wandering way,
And give a gracious greeting to our glee,
O halcyon hours of happy holiday!

Or pacing prairies in pursuit of prey,
Or sailing silent on a southern sea,
(Sweet is the sunshine, soft the summer's sway),
Or gliding giddy down some glacier gray,
Or joining in a German jubilee,
O halcyon hours of happy holiday!

We breathe such buoyant bliss that we betray
Our sportive spirits strangely—*sans souci.*
Sweet is the sunshine, soft the summer's sway,
And dear the dreaming of those days *distraits*
We find with ye, so *fainéants* and free,
O halcyon hours of happy holiday!

## *TRIOLETS FOR "THE TWELFTH."*

AWAY from city chafe and care,
At forty miles an hour flying,
Now let the train me, *blasé*, bear
Away from city chafe and care.
To breezy braes, from street and square,
Who would not, an he could, be hieing;
Away from city chafe and care,
At forty miles an hour flying?

How nice a month on moors to pass
Mid purling becks and purpling heather,
To give the grouse their *coup de grâce*,
How nice a month on moors to pass!
If Fortune prove a liberal lass,
If but auspicious be the weather,
How nice a month on moors to pass,
Mid purling becks and purpling heather!

## *TRIOLETS FOR "THE TWELFTH."*

Plague take the rain! upon my word,
These mountain mists, how they do hover!
I wish from town I'd never stirred.
Plague take the rain! upon my word,
'Tis just my luck, and not a bird
My guileless gun contrives to cover.
Plague take the rain! upon my word,
These mountain mists, how they *do* hover!

## *BALLADE OF THE BLUE-ROCK.*

BY THE SURVIVOR OF THE FITTEST.

BEYOND the garish glint and glare
  Of London 'neath a summer sky,
Beyond the stifling street and square,
  Where Pleasure does her commerce ply,
All worldlings to a paddock hie,
  With dreams of slaughter in their brain;
Kind cultured souls, who would deny
  Their pity for a pigeon's pain!

Rank, beauty, wit, are mustered there,
  With fashion's firman to comply,
To speculate with ventures rare
  On mangled wing or blinded eye;
A thousand deaths I'd rather die
  Than plucked should be *my* feathered train;
Yet no one cares to raise a cry
  Of pity for a pigeon's pain.

## *BALLADE OF THE BLUE-ROCK.*

The tricks my kith and kin must bear,
  That they in ways oblique may fly,
Would cause a man, forsooth, to swear,
  Were birds the same on him to try.
Then let no human heart be shy
  Our plaintive cause to entertain,
And rouse sportive society
  To pity for a pigeon's pain.

ENVOI.

Princess, who from thy station high
  Such wanton pastime dost disdain,
God bless thee for thy gracious sigh
  Of pity for a pigeon's pain!

## *BALLADE OF THE BLOOMER.*

NOW let the belles of fashion ring
A long farewell to all their woes;
For dress will soon become a thing
Of comfort and of joy to those
Who follow where Pure Reason goes
In healthy garb for night or noon:
Ah! who can tell, in verse or prose,
The pleasure of the pantaloon?

Proud petticoats, which, reckless, fling
Your flounces to the mud that flows!
Skirts, short and sweet, that deftly swing
Round pointed heels and patent toes!
The female form ye shall enclose
No more, but perish syne or soon:
The leg that once has tried it knows
The pleasure of the pantaloon.

## *BALLADE OF THE BLOOMER.*

No more let cruel corsets bring
  The whitened cheek, the redden'd nose;
No more let 'jerseys' fondly cling,
  To point how stout the figure grows:
  The hygienic garment shows,
When wandering o'er dyke or dune,
  How blest is she who, prudent, chose
The pleasure of the pantaloon.

ENVOI.

  Dames of the philibeg and hose,
To limbs in limbo grant this boon:
  Wear it—and prove to friends and foes
The pleasure of the pantaloon!

## *BALLADE OF THE BROTHER-IN-LAW*

(OF A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER).

WHO knows my little ways so well,
And every want instanter sees?
Who with her remedies can quell
The rheumatism in my knees?
Who, when the children took the measles, had the street o'erlaid with straw,
And called in quite the best M.D.'s?—
Why, certainly, my sister-in-law!

Who soothes the wild, but plaintive, yell
That rises when her brothers tease
Matilda? Who when cooks rebel
Subdues the culinary breeze?
Who all my *jeux d'esprit* can seize?
Who never makes herself a bore?
Who always minds her *q*'s and *p*'s?—
Why, certainly, my sister-in-law!

## *BALLADE OF THE BROTHER-IN-LAW.*

Although the dear defunct doth dwell
(Let's hope) above in quiet ease,
Should I, below, the wish repel
To plunge again *in medias res?*
But for prohibited degrees,
If ever I should wed once more,
The woman I'd propose to—she's,
Why, certainly, my sister-in-law!

ENVOI.

Commons and Lords! whose wise decrees
Some people bless, and some deplore,
This Bill, if it should pass, will please—
Why, certainly, my sister-in-law!

## *BALLADE OF BELIEF.*

SAYS Herbert: Pray, list to my notion,
All ye who the truth would invite;
Be Agnostics, and spurn the emotion
That ghosts and the gospels excite.
In th' Unknown do I find all delight,
And in Infinite Energy see
All casual cravings unite—
And that's the religion for me.

Says Frederic: Pray, list to *my* notion:
Away with Impersonal Might,
To Humanity tender promotion,
And worship the idëal wight.
Though from stock that is Simian hight
He may trace out a pure pedigree,
Yet to Man will I anthems recite—
And that's the religion for me.

## *BALLADE OF BELIEF.*

Says Wilfrid : Pray, list to *my* notion :
  On the hip I will infidels smite,
'Tis only through Christian devotion
  That virtues with vices can fight.
  Whate'er may Theology write,
Whatever the Church may decree,
  My soul shall acknowledge as right—
And that's the religion for me.

ENVOI.

(*Voice of the Bewildered One.*)

O faiths full of riddle and rite,
  O philosophies deep as the sea,
In this posse of problems polite,
  Prithee, where's the religion for me?

## *BALLADE OF THE BLUE RIBBON.*

THERE'S a beverage wholesomely blended
Of hydro- and nitro-gen gas,
With a tint more pellucidly splendid
Than brandy, brown sherry, or Bass ;
Fit refreshment for lad and for lass,
'Tis Dame Nature's beneficent brew ;
Then fill with pure water a glass,
And drink "To the Ribbon of Blue!"

Let the search for sound claret be ended,
Let the "Châteaux" lie buried in grass,
Now perish the beeswing, defended
In bins full of sawdust so crass ;
Let Chartreuse be no longer a "*chasse*,"
Farewell to all "Comet" and "cru ;"
Come, fill with pure water a glass,
And drink "To the Ribbon of Blue !"

## *BALLADE OF THE BLUE RIBBON.*

Our ways and our means shall be mended
(Not before they both need it, alas !)
When no longer is alcohol vended,
The curse, aye, of every class ;
The man is a bibulous ass
Who his soul in the dram-pot would stew ;
Better fill with pure water a glass,
And drink "To the Ribbon of Blue !"

ENVOI.

Good Templar, whenever you pass
By the Thames, or the river called "New,"
Fill with those pure waters a glass,
And drink "To the Ribbon of Blue !"

## *BALLADE OF YE BAZAAR.*

"*If the winter's the season for colds and—catarrhs,*
*The summer's the season for balls and—bazaars.*"—ANON.

TO the souls of the sensitive sex
There is one of society's shows
That, encouraged by Charity's becks,
Never seemingly wearisome grows;
'Tis a market (as everyone knows
Who follows of fashion the star)
Where the vendors are beauties and beaux
At the stalls of a fancy bazaar.

No fatigue can its votaries vex;
Though crippled with cramps in their toes,
Though chastened by cricks in their necks,
They never look cross or morose.
With a smile they will deftly expose,
From a doll to a Japanese jar,
Whatever your taste may disclose
At the stalls of a fancy bazaar.

## *BALLADE OF YE BAZAAR.*

If a bouquet your coat would annex,
A countess will sell you a rose;
If thirst your blue ribbon perplex,
H.R.H. has a tap where tea flows.
In flowers to flatter your nose,
Cigarettes from a "Thespian" bar,
Of a fiver you soon can dispose
At the stalls of a fancy bazaar.

ENVOI.

O *mondaines*, your charity throws
Its shield o'er Frivolity's car,
As Samaritan sirens ye pose
At the stalls of a fancy bazaar!

## *BALLADE OF THE BRUNNEN.*

AS the dances and dinners are waning
Now the season has come to its close,
When by reason of reckless champagne-ing
Gout twinges in fingers and toes,
Off to Germany all the world goes
At some spa therapeutic to halt,
Where the water obligingly flows
In a stream full of soda and salt.

There life is a rigorous training—
First, "rise early" the doctors impose ;
Then of certain small cups the slow draining
Will for food the digestion dispose.
To the "cure" many viands are foes,
With the diet you mustn't find fault,
Nor unfit *mésalliances* propose
To a stream full of soda and salt.

## *BALLADE OF THE BRUNNEN.*

From all kinds of excitement refraining—
(*E.g.* balls, suppers, even *tableaux*)—
Your health will you soon be regaining
With a peptic *régime*—and repose.
Though your liver *engouement* disclose,
You may yet 'scape the family vault,
If you drink of the water that flows
From a stream full of soda and salt.

**ENVOI.**

Let poets and writers of prose
The praise of the Brunnen exalt,
Where humanity washes its woes
In a stream full of soda and salt.

**FINIS.**

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